

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00 OFA-01 DLOS-04

AID-05 FRB-03 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PRS-01 INT-05

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FM AMCONSUL DURBAN

TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2135

RUEHCRXAMEMBASSY MAPUTO 107

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652:G N/A

TAGS:Z ELTN ESTC PFOR MZ RH SF

SUBJECT: NATAL PORTS AND RHODESIAN SHIPMENTS

REF: STATE 056764, DURBAN 0079

1. POST HAS CONTACTED VARIETY OF SOURCES INCLUDING HARBOR OFFICIALS, SHIPS AGENTS AND FINANCIAL JOURNALISTS TO DETERMINE FURTHER INFORMATION ON CAPACITY OF NATAL PORTS TO HANDLE RHODESIAN TRAFFIC, ESPECIALLY LARGE AMOUNTS OF ORE AND GRAIN WHICH FORMERLY TRANSITED MOZAMBIQUE (STATE 056764).

2. ORES: CONSENSUS OF SOURCES CONSULTED IS THAT NATAL'S CAPACITY TO HANDLE SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER AMOUNTS OF ORE SHIPMENTS
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FROM RHODESIA IS CURRENTLY NOT VERY HIGH. DURBAN HARBOR'S BULK

HANDLING FACILITY NOW HANDLES MOSTLY COAL BUT ALSO SOME FERRO-ALLOYS INCLUDING A RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT OF RHODESIAN CHROME (EXACT BREAKDOWNS WILL BE PROVIDED WHEN POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN). DURBAN FACILITY IS CONSIDERED TO HAVE SOME SPARE CAPACITY AT PRESENT (NOT A GREAT DEAL, ACCORDING TO HARBOR CHIEF ENGINEER); HOWEVER, PLANNED EXPANSION OF SOUTH AFRICAN ORE EXPORTS ARE EXPECTED TO ABSORB THIS SMALL CAPACITY. DURBAN ORE LOADING IS BY RELATIVELY SLOW MECHANICAL PROCESS(BUCKET SYSTEM). SOUTH AFRICAN EXPORT SHIPMENTS ARRIVE IN PORT BY TRAIN TO MEET SHIPS ON SCHEDULED SYSTEM. RHODESIAN SHIPMENTS, HOWEVER, ARE SO SMALL.

TO WARRANT STOCKPILING AT PROSPECTON (NEAR ISIPINGO RAIL AREA OF PORT) UNTIL AMOUNTS ACCUMULATE SUFFICIENT TO SHIP. THOUGH FIGURES NOT YET OBTAINED, RHODESIAN SHIPMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE ONLY FRACTION THOSE OF SA. CONSENSUS THUS IS THAT DURBAN IS LIMITED IN ITS ABILITY TO HANDLE LARGE ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS OF RHODESIAN ORES AND ALLOYS. IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT PORT ELIZABETH MIGHT HAVE MORE SIGNIFICANT ROLE TO PLAY FOR THESE COMMODITIES.

3. GRAINS: SOURCES CONFIRMED EARLIER STATEMENTS (DURBAN 0079) THAT SAG-OPERATED GRAIN HANDLING FACILITY IS AT FULL CAPACITY ALREADY WITH SA GRAIN EXPORTS(PRINCIPALLY MAIZE). POLICY CURRENTLY PERMITS ONLY SAG-CONTROLLED FACILITIES TO HANDLE GRAIN EXPORTS. THERE IS ADDITIONAL, COMMERCIAL CAPACITY IN PORT AREA BUT THIS IS CURRENTLY 90 PERCENT DEVOTED TO IMPORTS, INCLUDING US RICE.

4. RICHARDS BAY ROLE: IT IS WIDELY HELD THAT RICHARDS BAY CANNOT BE A FACTOR IN ALLEVIATING RHODESIA'S SHIPMENT PROBLEMS, AT LEAST WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR. BULK HANDLING FACILITIES SCHEDULED TO BE OPENED THIS YEAR ARE ENTIRELY COMMITTED TO CONTRACTS FOR EXPORT OF SA PRODUCTS. THESE SPECIFICALLY INCLUDE COAL(BERTH OPENING APRIL FIRST) AND ROCK PHOSPHATE (BERTH SCHEDULED FOR OCT-NOV COMMISSIONING).

5. IT THUS APPEARS THAT IT IS IN GENERAL CARGO AREA THAT MOST SUPPORT FOR RHODESIA CAN BE PROVIDED BY NATAL PORTS. AS INDICATED DURBAN 0079 , SPARE CAPACITY IS AVAILABLE NOW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND LOCAL AGENTS EXPECT SHARP RISE IN SHIPMENTS BOTH FOR RHODESIA AND FROM HOPED-FOR RISE DURING NEXT YEAR IN SA ECONOMY. WE HAVE, FOR EXAMPLE, ONE REPORT THAT SPECIAL AREA IN DURBAN.

PORT IS BEING PREPARED FOR STOCKPILING STEEL PRODUCTS SHIPMENTS FOR RHODESIA.
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